

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PRETOR 03756 01 OF 03 041245Z POSS DUPE
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 SS-15 SP-02 PA-01 H-01 INR-10 IO-13
NSCE-00 CIAE-00 HA-05 ISO-00 /058 W
-----017183 041523Z /44S

R 040900Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1617
INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LILONGWE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 PRETORIA 3756

NSC FOR AARON FROM LOW

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, RH
SUBJECT: RHODESIA: PROGRESS AND PROSPECTS OF THE INTERNAL
SETTLEMENT

1. THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN SMITH AND THE INTERNAL
NATIONALISTS SIGNED ON MARCH 3 IS NOW FOUR MONTHS OLD.
INSOFAR AS ITS STATED PURPOSE WAS TO END SANCTIONS AND
THE WAR, IT HAS NOT SUCCEEDED AND ITS PROSPECTS ARE
NOT GOOD.

2. LIFE IN RHODESIA IS DOMINATED BY THE WAR. CASUALTY
FIGURES ARE GROWING BUT MANY BELIEVE THAT THEY SHOW
ONLY PART OF THE PICTURE. A NUMBER OF CONTACTS ARE
CONVINCED THAT THE ACTUAL CASUALTIES ARE HIGHER THAN
REPORTED AND THAT THE NUMBER OF WOUNDED WHICH IS NOT
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PRETOR 03756 01 OF 03 041245Z POSS DUPE

REPORTED, IS QUITE HIGH. I HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT ONE OR
TWO CIVILIAN MASSACRES OF THE GUTU-MASHONGANYIKA
KIND HAVE OCCURRED BUT BEEN HUSHED UP. THE
SPECTACULAR KILLINGS ON BOTH SIDES ARE GROWING IN
FREQUENCY AND SIZE AND A RETALIATION ASPECT MAY BE
ENTERING. THE "MASSACRES" APPEAR TO BE THE WORK OF
INSUFFICIENTLY CONTROLLED ELEMENTS ON BOTH SIDES. "ROGUE" BANDS

OF GUERRILLAS OPERATE IN BOTH THE EAST AND WEST WHERE WE UNDERSTAND BANDITRY, EXTORTION AND CATTLE RUSTLING ARE NOT INFREQUENT. A NUMBER OF RESPONSIBLE OBSERVERS EXPRESS UNCERTAINTY ABOUT THE IDENTITY OF THE PERPETRATORS OF THE VUMBA MASSACRE IN WHICH THIRTEEN MISSIONARIES WERE MURDERED IN A PURPOSELY HORRIFYING MANNER.

3. NORMAL ACTIVITIES AROUND THE COUNTRY ARE AFFECTED. THERE ARE NOW NO SECONDARY SCHOOLS FUNCTIONING IN THE WEST (MATABELELAND) AND RELATIVELY FEW IN THE REST OF THE COUNTRY EXCEPT FOR THE MAJOR CITIES. I RECEIVED AN UNCONFIRMED REPORT THAT SOME 60,000 WHITES HAVE DECLARED TO THE CENTRAL BANK THEIR INTENTION TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY AFTER THE 31ST OF DECEMBER--A NECESSARY STEP TO REQUESTING THE LIMITED FOREIGN EXCHANGE ALLOWED THOSE LEAVING. LIFE AMONG BOTH WHITES AND BLACKS OUTSIDE THE CITIES IS DIFFICULT. IN SOME AREAS THERE HAS BEEN A DECREASE IN VIOLENCE, PARTICULARLY WHEN WHITE FARMERS HAVE MADE CONTACT WITH GUERRILLAS. BUT THERE IS AN EMBATTLED QUALITY TO MOST LIFE AFTER DARK OUTSIDE THE MAJOR CITIES.

4. WHAT POPULAR POLITICAL FORCES ARE AT PLAY IS DIFFICULT TO DETERMINE. IT APPEARS THAT TRIBALISM IS INCREASING AS PEOPLE FALL BACK ON THEIR CLOSEST TIES.
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 PRETOR 03756 01 OF 03 041245Z POSS DUPE

MATEBELELAND (15-25 PCT OF THE POPULATION) IS TACITLY ABANDONED TO NKOMO WHOM NO ONE WOULD SERIOUSLY CHALLENGE THERE. MUZOREWA HAS SOLID SUPPORT AMONG MANYIKA AND KORE KORE. CHIRAU AND SITHOLE HAVE NEGLIGIBLE POPULAR SUPPORT ACCORDING TO ALL ACCOUNTS. MUGABE'S TRIBAL BASE REMAINS AMONG THE KARANGA, THE LARGEST OF TH TRIBES (22 PCT), BUT HIS STRENGTH THERE IS STILL UNCERTAIN. MUZOREWA'S INTERNAL POLITICAL PROBLEMS ARE INCREASINGLY EVIDENT. HE HAS ABANDONED MANY OF HIS EARLIER SUPPORTERS INCLUDING SOME OF THE MORE POLITICALLY SOPHISTICATED TO SURROUND HIMSELF OFTEN WITH MORE TRADITIONAL, LESS WELL-EDUCATED, TRIBALLY-BASED FRIENDS OR RELATIVES, THOUGH A FEW OF THE MORE ARTICULATE REMAIN. THERE IS UNCERTAINTY OVER HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH HIS DEPUTY CHIKEREMA. THE ONE MOVEMENT WHICH MANY OBSERVERS NOTE IS FROM MUZOREWA TO MUGABE. SOME SEE THIS AS A SIGNIFICANT STRAW IN THE WIND.

5. THE CEASE FIRE PROGRAM OF CONTACTING GUERRILLAS TO GET THEM EITHER TO STOP FIGHTING OR THROW IN THEIR LOT WITH THE REGIME IS HAVING SOME SUCCESS. IN THE

SHORT TERM, HOWEVER, THIS IS LIKELY TO LEAD TO
INCREASING THE LEVEL OF VIOLENCE AS THOSE WHO HAVE
COME OVER TO THE REGIME TURN ON OR ARE ATTACKED
BY GUERRILLAS. ONLY LATER MIGHT SIGNIFICANT NUMBERS
BEGIN TO RESPOND TO THE CEASE FIRE AND THE LEVEL OF
HOSTILITY DECREASE EVEN IN THE BEST OF CIRCUMSTANCES.
AT THE MOMENT THE PROGRAM APPEARS INCAPABLE OF
PRODUCING A MAJOR SHIFT IN ALLEGIANCE OF GUERRILLAS
BARRING DRAMATIC POLITICAL CHANGES IN THE FUTURE.
EVEN SMITH'S RESIGNATION WOULD BE UNLIKELY TO
ACCOMPLISH THIS, IN MY VIEW.

NOTE BY OC/T: DISTRIBUTION CO-ORDINATED WITH S/S-O MISS ROBINSON.
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 PRETOR 03756 01 OF 03 041245Z POSS DUPE

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PRETOR 03756 02 OF 03 041355Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 SS-15 SP-02 PA-01 H-01 INR-10 IO-13
NSCE-00 CIAE-00 HA-05 ISO-00 /058 W
-----017290 041524Z /44S

R 040900Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1618
INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LILONGWE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 3 PRETORIA 3756

NSC FOR AARON FROM LOW

6. THE REGIME HAS MOVED SURPRISINGLY SLOWLY TO
RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF THE POLITICAL CLIMATE

TO THE SUCCESS OF THE CEASE-FIRE PROGRAM. IT HAS STILL DONE LITTLE ABOUT ELIMINATING DISCRIMINATORY LEGISLATION. THE LAND TENURE ACT ON THE BOOKS CONTINUES TO BAR AFRICAN PURCHASE OF HOMES IN URBAN AREAS. THERE IS A MOVE TO CHANGE THIS BUT IT IS EXTREMELY SLOW. RELEASE OF DETAINEES IS GOING SLOWLY. THE LAW AND ORDER MAINTENANCE ACT, CRITICIZED EVEN BY THE WHITE JUDICIARY REMAINS INTACT. THE UNPOPULAR PROTECTED VILLAGE PROGRAM CONTINUES. A GROUP OF VERY CONSERVATIVE AND INSENSITIVE WHITE MINISTERS AND WHITE MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT CONTINUE TO MAKE CLEAR THEIR LACK OF SYMPATHY WITH MOVEMENT IN THESE DIRECTIONS.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PRETOR 03756 02 OF 03 041355Z

7. THERE IS SURPRISING AGREEMENT AMONG INFORMED AND THOUGHTFUL PEOPLE AS WIDELY SEPARATED AS DAVID SMITH (IAN SMITH'S DEPUTY) LEADERS OF THE (LIBERAL) NATIONAL UNIFYING FORCE (NUF), SITHOLE'S DEPUTY (ELLIOT GABELLAH), THE PRESIDENTS OF THE THREE BUSINESS COUNCILS WE HAVE SEEN (INDUSTRY, FARMERS AND TOBACCO), THE AFRICAN MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT, AND MANY OTHER INDIVIDUALS ON THE FOLLOWING THREE CONCLUSIONS:

- A) THERE IS LITTLE PROSPECT OF A SIGNIFICANT DE-ESCALATION OF THE WAR WITHOUT WILLING PARTICIPATION FROM ONE OR BOTH OF THE LEADERS OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT.
- B) IT IS UNLIKELY IF NOT IMPOSSIBLE THAT CREDIBLE ELECTIONS IN TERMS OF ABSENCE OF FORCE AND VIOLENCE AND SIGNIFICANTLY BROAD PARTICIPATION CAN BE CARRIED OUT IN DECEMBER.
- C) IF AN UNCONVINCING ELECTION IS CARRIED OUT AND POWER TRANSFERRED TO THE VICTOR, THE WAR WILL CONTINUE AND GROW WORSE.

8. ONLY SITHOLE AND MUZOREWA AND THEIR CLOSE POLITICAL ALLIES SPEAK WITH CONFIDENCE AND CONVICTION THAT THE MARCH 3 AGREEMENT IS WORKING AND CAN ACHIEVE ITS PURPOSE. THEY CONTEND THE CEASE FIRE IS GOING WELL AND PEACEFUL CONDITIONS FOR AN ELECTION ARE POSSIBLE. THEY RAIL AGAINST EXTERNAL PRESSURES AND DECLARE THEIR WILLINGNESS TO FIGHT TO THE END TO MAKE THE MARCH 3 AGREEMENT WORK. IT IS DIFFICULT NOT TO MARK THIS DOWN TO SHEER BRAVADO WHICH WILL CONTINUE UNLESS THEY ARE FORCED TO AN ACCOMMODATION BY SMITH OR AN ACCEPTABLE ALTERNATIVE BECOMES AVAILABLE.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 PRETOR 03756 02 OF 03 041355Z

9. THREE POSSIBLE FUTURE DIRECTIONS ARE MOST OFTEN CONSIDERED. FIRST, PRESSING AHEAD WILLY-NILLY WITH THE PRESENT UNSATISFACTORY SITUATION TO ELECTIONS IN DECEMBER AND A TURNOVER OF POWER. THIS SEEMS THE LEAST LIKELY OF THE POSSIBILITIES. IAN SMITH HIMSELF HAS PRIVATELY EXPRESSED HIS DOUBTS ABOUT THIS TO US AND HE INDICATED PUBLICLY (TO CARL ROWAN) HIS DISSATISFACTION AND WILLINGNESS TO TRY SOMETHING ELSE. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT BETWEEN NOW AND DECEMBER THERE WILL BE SOME MAJOR CHANGES IN DIRECTIONS.

10. SECOND, SMITH MAY CONCLUDE THAT ELECTIONS, IF CARRIED OUT UNDER THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES WOULD RESULT IN AN UNACCEPTABLY HIGH LEVEL OF FORCE AND VIOLENCE AND WOULD THEREFORE SERVE NO USEFUL PURPOSE. AS A RESULT, HE MAY DECIDE TO PROLONG THE PRESENT ARRANGEMENTS FOR ANOTHER YEAR OR TWO DURING WHICH HE MAY BELIEVE THAT HE COULD CARRY OUT AN EFFECTIVE CEASE FIRE PROGRAM. ALTERNATIVELY, HE MIGHT BE PREVAILED UPON TO FORM A COALITION AMONG THE PRESENT INTERNAL NATIONALS AND TURN OVER POWER TO THEM ON DECEMBER 31 WITHOUT AN ELECTION. IF HE TOOK THE FORMER PATH, I BELIEVE HE WOULD LOSE ALL SUPPORT WITHIN THE COUNTRY AND SOON BE OVERTHROWN. THE LATTER PATH IS THE ONLY ONE WHICH WOULD HAVE ANY CHANCE OF OBTAINING SUPPORT WITHIN THE COUNTRY, BUT IT WOULD NOT RECEIVE WORLD SUPPORT OR END SANCTIONS OR THE WAR.

NOTE BY OC/T: DISTRIBUTION CO-ORDINATED WITH S/S-O MISS ROBINSON.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PRETOR 03756 03 OF 03 041332Z

ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 SS-15 SP-02 PA-01 H-01 INR-10 IO-13

NSCE-00 CIAE-00 HA-05 ISO-00 /058 W

-----017234 041524Z /44S

R 040900Z JUL 78

FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1619
INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LILONGWE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 3 OF 3 PRETORIA 3756

NSC FOR AARON FROM LOW

11. THIRD, THERE IS GROWING RECOGNITION AMONG ALL GROUPS WITHIN THE COUNTRY THAT THE MARCH 3 AGREEMENT, THOUGH A SIGNIFICANT STEP FORWARD WILL NOT ACHIEVE ITS PURPOSE. THEREFORE, SOME WAY MUST BE FOUND TO BRING IN THE PATRIOTIC FRONT LEADERS. TO MANY OF THE WHITES AND AN UNDETERMINED NUMBER OF AFRICANS THIS MEANS JOSHUA NKOMO. IT IS ALMOST CONVENTIONAL WISDOM TO HEAR COMMENTS THAT "IT CAN'T WORK WITHOUT NKOMO. WE HAVE TO BRING HIM BACK." THE WHITE POPULATION IS, HOWEVER, BADLY FRIGHTENED BY THE THOUGHT OF MUGABE PLAYING A ROLE IN THE FUTURE GOVERNMENT. ONLY THE MOST SOPHISTICATED BELIEVE IT IS NECESSARY TO INCLUDE HIM IF A CEASE-FIRE IS TO BE ACHIEVED AND PREFERABLE TO BRING HIM IN NOW WHILE HIS INFLUENCE IS LIMITED THAN TO MAKE A MARTYR OF HIM BY LEAVING HIM OUTSIDE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PRETOR 03756 03 OF 03 041332Z

WITH PROBABLE, FOREIGN (CHINESE) SUPPORT. THERE IS GROWING SUPPORT FOR AN ALL-PARTIES MEETING WHICH AN INCREASING NUMBER SEE AS A PANACEA. PETITIONS ARE BEING CIRCULATED AND INFLUENTIAL PEOPLE ASK US HOW THEY CAN HELP. NO ONE WANTS ANOTHER GENEVA BUT ALMOST EVERYONE (EXCEPT FOR MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE) BELIEVE THAT GETTING THE PARTIES TOGETHER IS A NECESSARY FIRST STEP TO A SETTLEMENT AND IT IS BEGINNING TO BE ACCEPTED THAT THIS WOULD MEAN A SIGNIFICANT MODIFICATION IN THE MARCH 3 AGREEMENT. THE QUESTION IS WHETHER THE PF LEADERS WILL STILL BE WILLING TO NEGOTIATE BY THE TIME THE INTERNAL NATIONALISTS HAVE COME AROUND TO AGREEING TO THE IDEA.

12. DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO REPEAT ABOVE TO OTHER POSTS.

EDMONDSON

NOTE BY OC/T: DISTRIBUTION CO-ORDINATED WITH S/S-O MISS ROBINSON.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 04 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978PRETOR03756
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780275-0428
Format: TEL
From: PRETORIA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780797/aaaadehn.tel
Line Count: 335
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: dbbd7c7b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 7
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2122407
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: RHODESIA: PROGRESS AND PROSPECTS OF THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT
TAGS: PINT, PINR, RH
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/dbbd7c7b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014